

Rowley.

Mar. 27. 1876

Oliver Johnson,

Christian Union Office,

New York City.

[Faint handwritten scribbles]



Ms. A. 1. 1 v. 9, p. 3A

Return to Dr. P. Garrison

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ALASKA

Roxbury, March 27, 1875.

My Dear Johnson:

After several weeks' disuse of my pen, owing to my illness, I am now resuming it; and I wish you to know that your letter of sympathy and condolence on the death of my dear wife (with many others of a similar purport) was very comforting to me. Prostrated myself at the time of the sorrowful event, it affected me all the more deeply. Even now, I feel not a little bewildered by the sudden and unexpected disappearance of her whose close companionship I have for so many years enjoyed, and who has so long drawn upon my tenderest sympathies and received my constant attentions, in consequence of her paralyzed condition. Every time I come into my sitting-room, it seems as if I must still see her at the accustomed window where for more than eleven years she was wont to be seated; but though I miss the bodily form, I seem to

be impressed by her presence in a more vital sense, if possible. Nor do I find it difficult to believe that it is still in her power, — and, if so, then in her loving nature, — to be very near us all, even in the very room consecrated by so many tender memories. You well know what are my views respecting death, in itself considered, and wholly apart from the grief naturally awakened by such a bereavement; that I see in it no darkness, no mysterious dispensation of Providence, no connection with the alleged transgression of "our first parents," no liability to be deplored, no change to be feared; but, on the contrary, as clear a proof of Divine Wisdom and Benevolence as is the provision for the advent of the human race upon this planet: —

"Angels of Life and Death alike are His;
Without His leave they pass no threshold o'er;
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,
Against His messengers to shut the door?"
And so, the will of God be done!

I have said that the dear one passed away both suddenly and unexpectedly. It is true that, for some time previous, she had been perceptibly weakening as to her bodily strength; yet it was not until the very morning of her departure that we became alarmed as to her case. It was pneumonia which wrought its fatal work upon her, precisely as it did upon Mrs. Martha C. Wright (Ellie's mother) the year previous. It is a disease which has cut off a great number within a few months, in every direction.

My dear friend, you can realize how I must and do feel in consequence of the separation; for you have had a similar sorrowful experience. Is it not solacing, however, to think that Mary-Ann and Helen may be again enjoying each other's society as of old, but under still more pleasant conditions? Assuming a re-union to be practicable, how many beloved ones are mingling sympathies and exchanging congratulations in the higher sphere!

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I am preparing a little Memorial, of which I will send you a copy as soon as it comes from the press.

Many thanks for the admirable cabinet photograph of your darling little girl. I am amazed to see how she has developed since I saw her here. May she be safely ^{carried} through all the ills that infancy and childhood are so liable to! Give her a kiss for me, by way of proxy, and Mrs. Johnson my congratulations and best wishes in regard to herself and little Helen.

Is the Progressive Friends' Meeting to be held at Longwood in June, as hitherto? If so, do you expect to be able to attend it?

Wendell told me, when here, of the possible change of your location from New York to Orange. Have you come to any conclusion on the subject? The region is certainly a very beautiful one, and has a wide reputation for its salubrity.

Yours by the strongest ties,
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.